

# Dwight's Journal of Music.

WHOLE NO. 603.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, MAY 14, 1864.

VOL. XXIV. NO. 4.

For Dwight's Journal of Music.

Half a dozen of Beethoven's Contemporaries.

II. ANTONIO SALIERI.

[Continued from page 226.]

Though Joseph's taste was so decidedly for the Italian *Opera Buffa*, yet occasionally a serious opera was put upon the stage, and sung by the *buffa* artists. [I do not see why Holmes (Mozart, p. 50, Amer. Ed.) should use this language, in speaking of events in the winter of 1767-8: "There were no other singers at that time in Vienna; and will it be believed that with such a set they even attempted Gluck's *Alceste*?" Shall a person of wit and humor never be serious? Should Gluck's *Alceste* go unsung, because the singers so rarely performed in *Opera Seria*?] Herr von Gamera had prepared a serious text, "*Delmita e Daliso*," with choruses and dances, which, only after repeated entreaties, Salieri at last consented to compose. He had little hope that it would succeed; and, though it was his only opera in the year 1776, and therefore not hastily written, his presentiment as to its fate was correct. And yet there were so many good things in it, that Mosel is of opinion its fate was determined by the ridiculous accidents, which occurred during the first performance.

The first scene is a rural amphitheatre, in which a crowd of peasants has assembled to see a wrestling match of shepherds. After the final rehearsal was over, the scene painter had the happy idea of painting into the turf terraces and among the trees a great number of figures, which added greatly to the scenic effect. After the games were over and the victors crowned, the crowd was to disperse leaving the head of the commune—whatever his title, Alcalde, Burgo-master, Mayor, first Selectman or 'Squire—with his two daughters alone. The great man has a secret to impart to them, and begins :

"Or che siam soli, o figlie." (Now we are alone, daughters.)

As he recited these words, and the audience saw the crowd of faces looking out from tree and bush, a laugh began, which increased finally to a roar, as the singers looked in all directions in vain to make out the joke, they being too near the scenery to make out the figures. In the second act *Daliso*, *Delmita's* lover, comes upon the stage armed, with the visor of his helmet down, to fight the monster to whom she is to be sacrificed, by the laws of the land. As she affrighted flees, he exclaims: "*Non fuggir, non temer, son' io Daliso*" (Fly not, fear not, I am *Daliso*), and has at the same moment to raise the visor, and show her his face. But "the fates, the sisters three, and such odd branches of learning," were in a merry mood that evening, and determined that the helmet should not open. So the more *Daliso* tried to raise the visor, the faster it seemed to hang, and the louder the audience laughed. This was the joke of Act II.

*Daliso* kills the monster, and the final scene shows Athens in the distance illuminated.

The audience heard one of the singers recite :

"*Vedete como allo splendor di mille faci e mille festeggia Atene.*" (See how with the splendor of thousands and thousands of torches Athens rejoices)—but all was dark. The signal had been given too late to the workmen, and not until the scene was ended and the curtain was descending did Athens blaze out amid the light of the "*mille faci*" and the uproarious laughter of the audience. In short there seems to have been no such lamentable comedy and tragical mirth at Athens, since the days of *Quince, Snug, and Bottom*. Gamera and Salieri's *opera seria* had proved an *opera buffa*, and at the close the composer laughed as heartily as the audience.

The first attempt by Joseph to build up the German stage, and its failure, has been before mentioned; a new attempt under the influence of Sonnenfels, in 1770, had succeeded, and at the period to which we have now arrived, 1776, the Court theatre in Vienna surpassed all others in Germany, in the excellence of its performances of German spoken dramas, as it had at one time surpassed the world in its Italian operas.

Fond as the Emperor was of his *opera buffa*, he now formed the magnanimous project of building up a real German opera. One management after another had broken down; the French company was dismissed; in 1774, Noverre, the ballet master, had to give place to the cheaper Angiolini; the receipts sank, and at the end of 1775, or early in 1776, the two court theatres came upon the hands of the Emperor. Hence, none of those "vested rights," which hinder progress in England in all directions, stood now in Joseph's way. The lower Austrian provincial government gave all the world notice that the Kärnthnerthor Theatre was made free to any foreign troop which would undertake it at its own risk; and by an imperial order of February 17, 1776, the Burg theatre was given up to the Germans, and received the title "Hof und National Theater"—Court and National theatre.

Let a correspondent of the *Leipziger Allg. Musik-Zeitung* (Vol. xxiv. 253) add what is necessary to an understanding of the theatrical revolution headed by the Emperor of Germany, at the time the lawyer Adams, the printer Franklin, the merchant Hancock, the physician Warren, the farmer Putnam, the planter Washington, the shoemaker Sherman, and their compatriots and fellow lawyers, merchants, &c., were heading, across the water, a revolution of quite another sort.

"Joseph now had the German drama performed four times a week; the prices were fixed at 3 gulden for the first and second boxes; first parterre 1 gulden; 2d parterre 20 Kreuzers; third row 30 Kr. and for the fourth row, 7 Kr. [It is near enough the exact rate if we reckon the gulden at half a dollar, with 60 Kr. to the gulden; the new kreuzers are 100 to the gulden, 48 cents.] At first, the new stage—like every thing which Joseph projected—found much opposition; but the daily presence and active sympathy of the Emperor by degrees filled the house;

the success which was achieved was owing, also, certainly in part, to the fact that all the German pieces were good and generally excellent. The permission to use the Kärnthnerthor house, [which had been recently rebuilt, after taking fire at a performance of Gluck's Ballet *Don Juan*, and burning down,] was, after a failure or two by others, availed of by an Italian opera troop, formed in part of the members of that which had just been dismissed. This troop played at its own risk, was good and diligent, and therefore soon gained the privilege of playing on the off days, also, in the Burg theater. This company had 7 men and 6 women, solosingers; among the latter Mlle. Cavalieri. In the Kärnthnerthor house, alternately with the Italian opera, Wäser's large troop, from Prussia, tried its powers in the German drama and opera and in ballet; but the company was about equally bad in all three and soon fell to pieces.

"As in every thing else, so also in theatrical matters, it was the favorite idea of Joseph at that time—much as he personally enjoyed the Italian opera, to show himself a *German* Emperor,—to favor in a special manner everything that was German—to have, as far as it was in any way possible, all in the German language and in German style. [If England could have had English kings after the revolution of 1688, with taste enough to encourage Purcell and his school, what might not have grown up out of the wonderful English, Scotch, Irish and Welsh schools of melody—the most beautiful to my taste in the world!]

"This idea of Joseph's, his wide and varied knowledge, his great and quick activity, and his passion for the theatre and music (for both, it is well known, he possessed uncommon talents, insight and skill) very soon effected much, which in one way and another proved of beneficial influence, and might have been more so, had his will been always so obeyed as it certainly ought to have been. For instance, in 1777, at his command and with his personal assistance, a plan was wrought out for the foundation of a school for the theatre and for the establishment and selection of a dramatic library; and both, soon and to a certain extent, actually put in operation. It was advertised that every poet, who contributed a piece, which could be and really should be acted, should receive the entire proceeds of the third night as his due. Joseph soon after had a formal code of laws for the members of theatrical companies drawn up, which had been utterly wanting hitherto, and to which the Parisian royal theatrical code served as a model.

"Towards the end of the year (1777) the Emperor at last made the experiment of founding an original German Opera, for which the pieces should neither be translations nor adaptations of the music. He himself chose for the first trial a little work by Umlauf [viola player in the orchestra]—which had but four vocal parts [rôles] and a chorus—called "*Die Bergknappen*." The entire company [in its present infancy] consisted

but of Mlle. Cavalieri, Madame Stierle, Mr. Ruprecht and Mr. Fuchs—the two men having until now never trod the stage. Umlauf was made music director and Henry Müller, a man of fine taste and tact, manager. Joseph amused himself with the preparations and rehearsals; and the new and modest enterprise—which was at first made a topic of jest and ridicule, and which gave its first public performance on Feb. 17, 1778\*—gained great and soon general applause. Joseph thereupon increased the company with three new solo singers, two men and one woman, and the result was, that during this year thirteen new pieces of greater or less extent were produced and the German opera established.

The "revolution" of course relieved Salieri from most if not all his operatic labors, at least for the time. After the failure of "*Delmita e Dalo*," he composed an oratorio, "*La Passione di Gesu Christo*," text by Metastasio, for a Pension Institution of the Vienna Musicians, which gained him great credit with the musically cultivated, and which, the poet once said in presence of the Emperor, was the most expressive music ever set to his poem. The overture was intended by the composer (*ipse dixit*) to express the repentance and despair of Peter, and is one of Salieri's best.

(To be Continued.)

\* In Forkel's *Musikalische-Kritische Bibliothek*, Vol. II 322, this first performance is thus reported:—

Vienna, February, 1778. Finally on the 17th inst., the first German operetta, *Die Bergknappen*—so impatiently expected—was produced. It surpassed the expectations of the public. The music and decorations were truly excellent. Mlle. Cavalieri, who formerly sang in the Italian opera *buffa* here, distinguished herself in singing several difficult and highly ornamented airs, and also by her much improved acting. Madame Stierle also received great applause. After the piece was ended and the curtain down, the audience demanded again the appearance of the performers. Thereupon all four came forward, and Mlle. Cavalieri delivered a very beautiful little speech of thanks to the spectators. His Majesty the Emperor is trying all means to bring these operettas into the mode and has the best subjects sought out. At present, all the solo parts are doubly filled, so that there shall be no interruption caused by the indisposition of this or that singer. Our famous actor, Mr. Müller, has the duty of instructing *infusion*; Mr. Umlauf in singing, &c., &c.

#### Concert Etiquette.

One of the tribulations of our life is to go to concerts and endure the ill manners and unmusical demonstrations of the people whom we meet there. A concert for the purely musical is a very rare thing—in fact, we are inclined to doubt if the majority of those who attend any but classical chamber concerts, are musical people at all. Let us look at the various kinds of city concerts given.

First, in all respects, should come those given by the Philharmonic Society, which have become as fashionable as the Italian opera, and probably for the same reason, namely, because the performances are wholly or in a great measure entirely unintelligible to a mixed audience. We mean by this, that most people find it quite as difficult to understand a German symphony as they do an Italian libretto; consequently, the necessity of occupying one's body, the mind being bored and annoyed, becomes apparent. To be sure, such people have no right to appear at concerts, but since their money is as good as any one else's and they do attend, we will see how they behave.

It is not unfrequent for old gentlemen to pull out a newspaper, taking care always to crinkle it during the most pianissimo portions of the music. The dowagers of fashion of course talk scandal or fall into a doze; we will not go quite so far as to say that they add to the music by snoring. At the Brooklyn Philharmonic we have often noticed ladies with their knitting, a custom which, after all, rather pleases our fancy than otherwise, or rather would do so were it not for the distressing

provincial look of the thing. Think of Beethoven or Mendelssohn composing in order to make knitting the less tiresome to old women! Yet so far as these poetic ladies are concerned, it must be a pleasanter place than any other to knit in. Longfellow says in *Hyperion*: "He did not dance, but thought to music." So with these provincial neighbors of ours, knitting to music must be pleasanter than knitting to household noises; besides, we have been assured that this species of knitting is always for the soldiers.

But old gentlemen and old ladies read newspapers, talk scandal, and go to sleep, how do the young people offend? Need any one ask who has attended city concerts? Who was it that first made the suggestion that the name of the Philharmonic Society be changed to "Flirt-Philharmonic"?

Flirting is so very extensive an accomplishment and possesses such numerous ramifications in the broad extent of its artistic perfection, that it would take up a great deal too much of our space should a complete analysis of its offences against concert etiquette be attempted here. So we shall content ourselves with merely mentioning a few details of it, as generally practised to our torture at the Philharmonic—or "Philharmonics," as boarding-school young ladies have dubbed these concerts.

These are talking, laughing, fan-gyrating, and lobbying—that is, performing the part of wall flowers staring, etc.,—programme crumpling, and chair-shuffling. We might almost add long-netting, although most people do consider it very good manners to stare people out of countenance with a double-barrelled opera-glass at concerts, forgetful of the fact that theatres and operatic performances are the only proper places for them, and that they do not quicken one's acoustic faculties.

We hold most tenaciously to the opinion that all demeanor of concert-audiences which appears as if they only came there to meet friends or to see their neighbors, lowers the Art reflectively, and plainly gives the performers to understand that they are only the apology for their coming to spend a frivolous hour in the hall, just as they would do at any other lounging-place.

Some people do not seem to know whether to keep their hats on or off at a concert; at least before the beginning of the music. We have frequently seen them on until the gas was turned up, which certainly can hardly be defended by any person who has been accustomed to associate with ladies. Also in leaving the hall, the majority of an ordinary city audience invariably clap their hats on again the instant the music ceases, even before they stand up, and it appears to us that, excepting in Romish and Episcopal churches (where the ceremony of consecration prohibits such a thing,) they would be just as excusable in acting likewise at the conclusion of the benediction.

Regarding applause, perhaps a few words may not now be out of place.

To applaud at a concert is considered vulgar by all the truly refined, yet it is a possible thing in our estimation to do a vulgar thing in a gentlemanly manner. For instance, since a noise of approbation is all that seems to be required, if one carries a rattan, quite a racket can be made by switching the back of a bench or other flat surface, and although some may consider this rather *outré*, we assuredly think it more excusable than the clodhopper habit of stamping the heels and striking one's palms together, thus often annoying the occupant of the next seat with one's elbows, besides getting into a decidedly provincial perspiration from such violent exercise, to say nothing about splitting one's kids, which to bachelors (who don't know how to sew) especially, at the present prices of the gloves, is no small item for consideration.

Then again, regarding the what, when, and whom to applaud, the stupidity and want of tact manifested by some people always provokes us. Surely everybody ought to know that when a great artist gives a concert in his or her own name, it is the grossest affront to such a virtuoso, to endeavor to *encore* the "assistants." Yet what

do we often observe? Some fledgling singer or other frequently is recalled merely through the fondness of the public for a simple popular ditty she may have sung, no matter how badly, as long as it is a favorite. Then when she returns to the stage so self-satisfied, and so complacently appropriating the applause which the audience intended for the composer, it always forces from us a sigh for the stolidity of the public and transparent vanity of many artists.

As an illustration of these remarks, we would ask the metropolitan reader how many times a season he ordinarily hears the "Star Spangled Banner" and the ballad "Kathleen Mavourneen"? We hope our patriotism may not be challenged by the mention of the former. It happened to occur uppermost, that was all; but is it fair for any singer to select that song for the sake of being *encored*, when she or he knows that even the most uneducated of audiences *must* applaud the words from a sense of duty? Then again, is it not most ludicrous to behold a long courtesy, bowing, smiling, and smirking performance before its repetition, just as if both poet and composer were concentrated in the insignificant person of the third or fourth-rate singer on the stage? Such exhibitions must always disgust the truly refined lover of art, and thus we often find the finest amateurs in music almost never attend concerts.

But we would not have our readers imagine that bad manners at concerts are by any means confined to the listeners. There seems to be no school for artists yet started in this country by which to enlighten them little on certain points not altogether unworthy of their notice, in order to increase the comfort of their intelligent audiences.

We will take for example some charitable concert at which all the artists are on a supposed equal footing before the public; that is, they all volunteer their services, and no special prominence is given (at least in printing-ink) to any one in particular. Now, in case of *encores* at such a performance, how foolish it is for an artist to respond and reappear on the faintest apology for a recall. Yet they often do; nor is it merely to bow acknowledgments, but oftenest to sing or play again.

Artists may take it for granted when they are recalled, that nine times out of ten it is done by a few friends, and not by the majority of the audience; therefore, they stand a better chance of favoritism with the public by merely bowing, than they would by repeating their performance, lengthening out the programme and obtaining the ill-will of their fellow-artists.

Then again, when a real earnest, hearty, unanimous *encore* is insisted upon by the audience, it sometimes becomes a nice question to decide what to do. With piano duets or vocal concerted pieces, it usually is the best taste to repeat the last movement alone, while with soloists, either vocal or instrumental, custom has seemed of late to give very respectable sanction to performing an entirely different composition, which we must say is an unsafe plan, however, for three reasons: first, because, if new to the audience, it is not half as likely to fasten their attention at the piece just presented; second, the audience, by the recall, have proven that they admire the first piece, and perhaps they may not be equally pleased with another; and thirdly, an entirely different composition is very apt to be twice as long as the first, and is likely to cause fatigue to the listeners, an injury few can forgive in an artist or a preacher. The worst thing, however, which an artist can do, we apprehend, is to sing or play the entire cavatina or fantasia over again from the very beginning, or if it be a ballad, to repeat every blessed verse, let there be four or five of them. We have witnessed such distressing instances of ill-breeding over and over again, and it has always seemed a wonder how any musician could possibly possess so little consideration for their fellow-beings.

It is quite beyond the limits allotted to us to speak of all the detailed annoyances inflicted upon the public at concerts, such as blunderbuss-accompanists, and those who feel so much above their duties as to constantly make pitiful attempts

at *obbligato* embellishments in the worst possible taste, singers who are too lazy to commit their parts to memory and who bring the music on to the stage—which always suggests an actor doing likewise—violinists who seem to consider the flourish of the fiddle-bow of much more importance than the correct intonation of the semitones, double-stoppings, etc., etc., but “*verbum sat sapienti*,” and we dismiss the subject, with a devout hope for improvement in some of the above particulars, ere long, in those entertainments professing to be *first-class* metropolitan concerts.—*New Nation*.

### Musical Festival in Philadelphia.

MR. FRY'S NEW OPERA, “NOTRE DAME DE PARIS.”  
From the Tribune's Special Correspondent.

PHILADELPHIA, May 5, 1864.

The musical festival in aid of the Sanitary Commission was on Wednesday evening inaugurated by the production of Mr. William H. Fry's new opera, “*Notre Dame de Paris*.” It is a remarkable fact that the greatest public interest and expectation in regard to this event were exhibited not here in Philadelphia, but in other and distant cities. In New York and elsewhere it had for many days been a prominent popular topic, the importance of which was recognized by the most generous announcements that journalism could bestow. The occasion was moreover distinguished by the special pilgrimage hither of numerous representatives of metropolitan art and literature—a circumstance by no means insignificant, when the physical and spiritual agonies of a railway passage through New Jersey are considered. Why Philadelphia should have remained comparatively indifferent to an event of such peculiar import to itself, it is difficult to understand. Twenty years ago, when the first of American operas, by the same author, was produced at the Chestnut-street Theatre, there was no limit to the eagerness with which its performances were welcomed, and the brilliant success of the young composer was met by the proud congratulations of the entire community. Does the new generation account itself superior to the consideration of musical advancement and development? It was certainly a serious disappointment for visitors to discover so little domestic concern upon a matter which everywhere else was held in high anticipation. The fact probably is that Philadelphians are not generally aware of the artistic importance which belongs to the production of a work like “*Notre Dame of Paris*.” Operas requiring equal magnitude of preparation are rarely attempted, even in Europe. Excepting Meyerbeer, no composer of the present day has power to procure the execution of similar works. The ordinary resources of the best foreign theatres would be inadequate to its representation, according to the composer's intentions. And this, I have cause to believe, is the principal reason why “*Notre Dame*” has not before now been produced in London or in Paris. Miss Adelina Patti, I know, was ready to undertake the principal role. Mr. Strakosch urged its acceptance by the managers of opera-houses in London, Paris, and Madrid. But when the exhausting conditions of its proper representation were understood, these gentlemen were unwilling to consider the subject further. The inevitable prospect of heavy expenses destroyed its chances. I remember, indeed, that Mr. Bagier of the “Italiens” went so far as to say that if Rossini himself were to write a new opera, involving large outlays for scenic, orchestral and choral preparation, he would not venture to produce it. Excepting at the Imperial Academy, there could have been no opportunity for an opera like this of Mr. Fry; and the doors of the Academy are double-locked and barricaded against all composers whose universal fame does not guaranty the sure success of their works.

That “*Notre Dame*” should, then, be undertaken in an American city, and undertaken in a spirit of liberal enterprise wholly consistent with its vast requirements, is a circumstance which ought to have engaged the utmost public attention and the heartiest public support. I even set aside consideration of the personal claim which the composer may be supposed to have upon the citizens of Philadelphia. The production of the opera was, of itself, an event worthy to be celebrated. For the first time in America, an orchestra equal in numbers to the most massive of European opera-houses contributed its effect. [The orchestra of the Imperial Academy is not larger, and that of Covent Garden not so large.] The chorus was unquestionably superior to the average of the best foreign theatres. The *mise-en-scène* would not have been surpassed in Paris or Berlin. These are

very striking facts. On the other hand, there were certain defects, such as would not be likely to occur abroad, but these were of minor importance, and due to the hurried condition of the first performance. The general character of the preparations was certainly unprecedented in America. Mr. Ullman's best achievements have not approached it. And it will probably be many years before another lyric production will be ventured on so magnificent a scale.

The representation on Wednesday evening at the Academy of Music was witnessed by a large, though not an overflowing audience. The success of the opera was complete. I shall not assume to speak analytically of its qualities for many reasons—chiefly because I should feel ill at ease in offering critical views upon the work of a composer who has himself created [!!] American musical criticism in the very columns in which I am writing. Applause was constant, and the call for Mr. Fry, after the fall of the curtain, was enthusiastic and unanimous. The performance presented many valuable characteristics. I have mentioned the amplitude of the orchestra and chorus. Their execution, under the excellent direction of Mr. Theodore Thomas, was almost free from blemish. The natural irregularities of a first night were the worst faults. The different roles were conscientiously interpreted by Mrs. Borehard, Mrs. Kempton, Mr. Castle, Mr. Campbell and Mr. Seguin. [Mr. Seguin's father was one of the principal artists concerned in the production of Mr. Fry's “*Leonora*” in Philadelphia, some twenty years ago.] The exquisite scenic effects, the wealth of stage decoration and the vivid costumes of the multitude that represented alternately soldiers, courtiers, and peasants, heightened throughout the impressiveness of the representation.

Mr. Fry's musical reputation will be greatly augmented by this work. Many of its attributes are of an order which the most famous composers are glad to be credited with. The instrumentation is rich and sonorous to a degree which few have surpassed. The operas of Bellini and Donizetti do not generally show such closely studied orchestral writing. It is replete with resonant choral effects, and in the construction of the concerted pieces imagination and skill are alike demonstrated. No one could deny that “*Notre Dame*” stands well in all these respects beside the acknowledged works of modern writers of repute. And it is impossible not to deeply regret that Mr. Fry's opportunities for public testing of his capabilities have been so limited. The stride from his “*Leonora*” to his “*Notre Dame*” is prodigious. In another country, where all men's bands and hearts are not against the progress of art, that stride might have been made a score of years ago; and we need have very little hesitation in believing that Mr. Fry's name would now be an honored one far and near, wherever the art he has studied, and loved, and protected is held in esteem.

E. H. B.

### Gounod's New Opera.

A stranger experience is not on our record than that of Monday last, when “*Mircille*” was performed for the fourth time; not one more difficult to convey to the public without exaggeration. The impression may be briefly stated as under: two acts of perfect enjoyment, then one of wondering disapprobation, and, afterwards, two of admiration, with large exceptions. Let us enter into details which will explain what has been said, and explain, too, what we distinctly state that this chequered pleasure in M. Gounod's new work does not, in the smallest possible degree, shake our opinion of him as a composer.

It may be remembered that, in the New Year's number of this journal, an outline was offered of M. Mistral's lovely Provençal poem, indicating not merely the treasure of simple and impassioned tenderness casketed in it, but also the vivid and truthful coloring of its scenery. How such a clever man as M. Carré could have missed both, in some most important passages, in arranging the tale, retaining the while certain passages and features ineligible for stage presentation,—how a man of poetic genius like M. Gounod could have consented (under the seduction of indiscriminating admiration of the poem) to work on the canons thus furnished,—are among the vexations mysteries of the musical drama—vexations, because the story ever so simply beautiful, and the composer ever so thoroughly imbued with its beauty, his inspiration must fail when the scene does not warrant it; his feet instinctively refuse to bear him over the bridge when its planks are rotten.

“*Mircille*” opens with a pastoral overture, well sustained, and wrought up to an excellent climax. The first act is among the mulberry-trees of Provence, where the girls are gathering leaves for the

silk-worms. A more delicious and fresh chorus for female voices (not forgetting that in Beethoven's “*King Stephen*”) does not exist. The burden is irresistible, and the entrance of *Tarcu*, the wise woman (Madame Faure-Lefebvre), and of *Mircille* (Madame Miolan-Carvalho) among the girls who are talking of their lovers, could not be better devised. Exquisite, too, is the duet between the heroine, daughter of a rich farmer, *Ramon* (M. Petit), and the poor basket maker, *Vincent* (M. Morini), on whom she has bestowed her love, to the great scorn of her ambitious companions. One phrase alone, “*O e' Vincent, comme il sait gentiment tout dire*,” would suffice to stamp its writer as a man of delicate and individual genius, were there not hundreds of the kind from his hand. The act—or rather call it prelude—closes with a resumption of the first chorus dying away behind the scenes.

Act the Second opens with a *Farandole* (or Provençal dance) and chorus, including a two part ballad, with chorus, sung by *Mircille* and *Vincent*. Here, again, M. Gounod is in his happiest vein. The dance has rustic brilliancy and animation; the ballad telling how a certain *Magali* treated her lovers, a characteristic and quaint tenderness not to be surpassed. Their value, whether in point of musical fancy or local coloring will be felt, if they be compared with the best pages of Halevy's “*Val d'Andorre*” or M. Meyerbeer's “*Pardon*.” Music fuller of open-air sunshine was never written. The ballad of *Magali* is peculiar as an example of rhythm, written in bars of 9/8 and 6/8 *tempo* alternately, yet without any apparent halt or dislocation. Next comes a song for *Tarcu*, which is no less excellent; then an air of parade for *Mircille*, which, effective though it be, we like the least of anything in the act. Being out of place, its writer has fallen out of style, and written the usual *opéra en vaudeville*. Now enters *Orrius*, the brutal bull-fighter (M. Ismael), and woos the reluctant *Mircille* in a sufficiently rough song. When, after her lively indifference, her explicit avowal makes it clear to him that she will have none of his vows, her heart having been already given away, he calls in *Ramon*, her father, to maintain his cause, and simultaneously appear *Vincent*, *Urcinette*, his sister (Madame Reboux), and *Aubin* (M. Warfel), his father, the basket-maker, who comes to ask the hand of *Mircille* for her lover. The former is outraged at such presumption, and, deaf to *Mircille*'s prayers and appeal to the memory of her dead mother, drives her from him, to seek, if it so please her, beggary and disgrace. This is the stuff of the *finale*, which is conducted with admirable vigor and character. Nothing can be at once more truly pathetic and forcible than the sextet led by *Mircille*, “*A vos pieds, hélas! me voilé*,” opening with one of those clear and distinguished phrases of which M. Gounod possesses the secret. The *stretto*, with chorus, which closes the act is more according to the ordinary pattern.

Up to this point the music of “*Mircille*” sustains at least the reputation of the writer of “*Faust*,” if it do not add to it, by exhibiting him as a perfect master of scenic color. The sun of the South of France, we repeat, is in it. With Act the Third—or the Fantastic Act—we arrive at the rotten bridge spoken of. This no magic could enable our musician to cross. It opens with a weird and evilish scene, where M. Gounod has fallen into a remembrance of, or coincidence with Mendelssohn's well-known *presto scherzando* in F sharp minor. This is followed by a chorus of the sympathizing friends of the rejected *Orrius*, and this by a duet between the bull-fighter and his successful rival, not without passages of vigor. For a reason to be given presently, this, the best number in the act, was omitted in the first representations; thus leaving the audience in doubt as to the reason of the remorse of *Orrius* when he returns to the stage, after having, he believes, killed his man. Then *Tarcu*, the wise woman, reappears, who is to restore *Vincent* to life; but it would seem as if here again stage difficulty presented itself; since this incident, too, has been removed, thereby rendering subsequent scenes all but impossible to understand. We are now beside the Rhone, with its phantoms of drowned lovers wandering in the moon-light, scaring the conscious-stricken *Orrius*, who attempts to cross the river in a supernatural boat, which always sinks when there is a murderer on board, and is drowned accordingly. Nothing can be more picturesque and weird than this scene in M. Mistral's poem—few things can be more wearisome and preposterous than as it is seen and heard in the opera. For spectres (always dangerous *dramatis personae*) we have *Ondines*; and in the music, M. Gounod's sense of the supernatural, so awfully displayed in his “*Nonne Sanglante*,” is here exchanged for that which is far-fetched and sickly; which tires in place of exciting the slightest thrill of terror. As this act stands, it dooms “*Mircille*.”

Act the Fourth is better as a whole. It opens with a stout, if not a very new, chorus of reapers, followed by the duet betwixt *Mireille* and her lover's sister, in which the latter acquaints *Mireille* with *Vincent's* peril, and the heroine declares that she will repair to the shrine of the Three Maries to pray for his deliverance. This is done in another of those sublime phrases which mark their writer as a man of elevated genius beyond caviller's power to question. The scene changes to the burning wilderness of the *Crau*; across which the pilgrim of love must pass, stricken down in her passage by a sunstroke. This, again, as originally arranged for the stage, is tedious. It contains, however, a lovely herd-boy's song, with a pastoral symphony, and a good romance for the heroine ere she wends on her weary way.

The last act is before the chapel of the Three Maries, at which she arrives to die in the arms of her lover, who has followed her (and whose living re-appearance is so inexplicable as to be all but absurd), and of her father who has forgiven her, and consents when too late to save her. Here we have religious procession, march and chorus, with the true French color in it, a scene for the tenor, omitted in representation, and a final trial and apotheosis, than which those closing "Fanst" were better because the first.

Such is "Mireille," and the above remarks give one reason for conceiving that unless the last three acts be remodelled, with large suppression (as in the fantastic scene), condensation, and it may be the introduction of new action and incident, to make the story clearer, the opera may fail to keep the stage, in spite of many beauties which have been specified, in spite of M. Gounod having shown in it advance, that could be, in his treatment of the orchestra. It is worth every one's while to see that this is thoroughly and unflinchingly done. It would be vexatious, indeed, for the sake of all concerned, were so much genius, labor, time, and cost to prove thrown away.

The performance of "Mireille" is excellent, with one important drawback, the part of the lover. Tenors are difficult folks to handle, all the world over. There are those who compromise operas by the exactions and caprices of their vanity—there are those who are yet more seriously damaging, by their utter incompetence. The *Vincent* of the Théâtre Lyrique belongs to the latter company. The other artists already named are all thoroughly sufficient—save Madame Miolan Carvalho, who deserves another epithet. To praise her too highly would be impossible. Her voice, on Monday in perfect tune, was equal to every demand made by the poet for power, pathos, and passion—her execution is as finished and boundless as ever—her accent is such as has not been heard since Madame Persiani left the stage—her declamation is as fine and delicate as if she were a comedian who had better words than opera platitudes to deliver. But even such consummate art and feeling as hers may fail to save "Mireille," unless a thorough reform and compression of three fifths of the opera be undertaken and carried out.—*Paris letter, March 28.*

From the Evening Post.

#### Organists and Singers in New York.

##### THE LATEST CHOIR GOSSIP. THE CHANGES FOR

MAY.

Every spring season sees a number of changes in the musical department of our different churches: and organists and singers, in contradistinction to leopards, change their spots very often—for, as the venerable joke of the negro minstrels hath it, they leave one spot and go to another.

This year, however, the changes are more numerous among singers than among organists; the leading players remain in their old situations. Thus, our stylish friends of Grace Church will still listen to the splendid pedal playing of George W. Morgan, the soprano of Mrs. Bodenstein, and the graceful and polished salutations of the courtly and suave Brown. Trinity Church will still, though with some changes in the personnel, under the direction of Henry S. Cutler, emulate successfully the cathedral music of England, while the choir will be enriched by some fresh boy and men voices; and while speaking of Trinity, it may be worth while to state that the entire choir of this church intend soon making a trip to Reading, Pennsylvania, where a new organ is to be opened, and where Rev. Dr. Vinton is to do his part by preaching a sermon upon music.

At St. John's Chapel, where George F. Bristow has been organist of late, there is talk of introducing the system of boy choirs. At St. Paul's, where there is a good double quartet, there will be no change,

Mr. Michael Erben continuing to have charge of the music. At St. George's, Stuyvesant Square (Rev. Dr. Tyng's), the system of a double quartet for antiphonal chanting (with a chorus), having been tried experimentally for the past few months, will hereafter be permanently adopted, and it is intended that the music shall adhere to the strict ecclesiastical style.

At St. Mark's, where J. N. Pattison, the pianist, is organist, the system of a single quartet, so generally popular, will be maintained, and the music will continue, as hitherto, to elicit the admiration of strangers and others visiting the church.

At Dr. Chapin's church, on Broadway, the old system of congregational singing, so long in vogue there under the skilful precentorship of Mr. Henry Molten and other, will be abandoned, the quartet and organist previously officiating at St. Ann's in Eighteenth street, having been engaged for the Broadway church. At St. Ann's it is intended to give congregational singing, to be led by a choir of boys under the superintendence of Mr. Martin, so indentified with the Sunday school of the church. The deaf-mutes who form the afternoon congregation at St. Ann's are serenely indifferent to all musical changes, acting in their ordinary social life on the principle that fingers were made before tongues, if not before forks.

Nor should this St. Ann's, Protestant Episcopal in Eighteenth street, be confused with St. Ann's Roman Catholic, in Eighth street and Astor Place. For the latter church Errani, the accomplished Italian tenor, is engaged.

At the Church of St. Francis Xavier Mr. William Berge will continue to give the best music of the kind in the city, with Mrs. Cooper as *prima donna*.

The music at the Twenty-eighth Street Roman Catholic Church (Rev. Dr. Cummings), will pass under the direction of Robert Heller, the magician, who has been appointed organist to the church.

In the meantime Mr. Morra, the late organist of St. Stephens, has gone to Zion Church (Bishop Southgate's), with Centemeri as basso, or rather baritone. This importation of an Italian and Roman Catholic element into a Protestant Episcopal church, as well as the very large salaries to be paid, is exciting considerable comment in choir circles; and it is expected that Zion Church will have about as "stylish" music as any in the city.

At Dr. Adams's church, in Madison avenue, Mrs. Jenny Kempton has been added to the already accomplished force, and we believe at the largest salary yet paid to any *contralto* in any New York choir.

At Dr. Osgood's church, the choir, which has been for the past year giving this church a first-class musical reputation, will be retained, and thus Miss Flint, Miss Rushby, Mr. Geary and Mr. J. R. Thomas will continue, with the skilful organist and graceful composer Mr. Hows, to delight both the regular congregation and strangers who may visit the Church of the Messiah.

At Dr. Bellows's church (All Souls) one star sets to be replaced by another. Henry C. Timm, the previous organist, has resigned, and William A. King (from Dr. Houghton's church of the Transfiguration) has been engaged in his place, as we are informed, at the highest salary paid to any organist in the city.

At Christ Church, the entire choir, including the accomplished *prima donna* Isadora Clark, has left, Miss Sconca taking the place of the leading soprano. Charles Wels is retained as organist, and a contract has been made with Erben for a large first-class organ, worthy of this prosperous church and congregation. The present instrument is suitable for a mission school in Dakotah territory rather than for a rich city church.

A new choir has been formed at Dr. Montgomery's Church of the Incarnation, Mr. William Beames remaining as organist. The new choir includes some voices of unusual merit. At St. Bartholomew's Miss Brainerd remains as leading soprano, and Clara W. Beames as organist.

At the Madison Avenue Baptist Church, where there has been heard a great deal of good music, the choir has experienced some changes in its personnel, but will remain under the charge of Mr. S. T. Gor don the organist.

At the Broadway (and Thirty-fourth street) Tabernacle Church, Mrs. Jamison has been appointed leading soprano in place of Mrs. Stone, who has resigned the position after holding it most satisfactorily for several years. The loss of the late Mr. Seymour is still felt in this church, and in the scarcity of good tenor voices he is doubly missed.

##### A WORD ABOUT BROOKLYN.

Brooklyn is responsible for many of the changes in our choirs; for it is a peculiarity of this suburban town, that it ever entertains an irrepressible yearning for singers who live in the up-town wards of New

York city. It engages them at heavy salaries, and seems to especially delight in those who reside in the vicinity of Fortieth street. This is good for the Sixth and Eighth avenue railroad lines, as well as for the Union Ferry company.

Brooklyn is, indeed, the El Dorado of New York vocalists, who always demand and get about twenty-five per cent. added to their salaries, because they have to come "away from New York;" and having secured this, they frequently move over to Brooklyn, thus involving the Sixth and Eighth avenue railroad and the Union Ferry Companies in heavy losses by the withdrawal of their patronage.

##### HUNTING A SITUATION.

It is curious to note the telegraphic sympathy by which choir folks become informed of choir changes. Let the music committee of any prominent up-town church decide to change the singers, and the news is mysteriously conveyed through the whole fraternity. Latent talent suddenly arises from Jersey City; unknown *prima donnas* take the first morning boat from Staten Island, while every ward of the city gives its quota of aspiring sopranos, altos, bassos or tenors. Brooklyn also comes out strong on these occasions; for it is a singular fact that, while Brooklyn yearns ever for singers in New York, it does not care a fig for those reposing in its own bosom; and consequently there is an international vocal exchange constantly going on between the two cities.

All these singers pounce upon the music Committee or Chairman, who has the disposal of the vacant situation. They visit him at his office, they invade the sanctity of his home, they spot him on his way to the reception of the "droppings of the sanctuary," and apply for the situation.

The application results in a "trial," which is a very distressing thing for all concerned. A dozen sopranos of all styles and abilities are "tried," one after the other, each of the eleven, who are not singing, bitterly criticizing the one who is. The unsuccessful candidate has thenceforth eleven "friends" who ever after detest her style and voice, and who attribute her success to a mysterious power behind the throne, which is termed by choir folk "influence in the church."

##### CONGREGATIONAL APPRECIATION.

The singers, unless of such undeniable merit and reputation as to demand instant recognition, generally have to go through a great deal that is unpleasant to secure a situation, and when they get it, they fully earn their salaries. They are expected, even when paid but a hundred dollars a year, to be punctual at all the Sunday services, and at the weekly rehearsals. They are bitterly criticized by the entire congregation, and may sing in a church year after year without forming a single acquaintance, or receiving even one passing courtesy from those whom they lead Sunday after Sunday in so important a part of Divine service. When they get the bronchitis or asthma they are civilly dismissed; nor do the annals of choirs record a single instance where a congregation, however rich, has offered an organist or singer "trip to Europe," or even to Saratoga or Long Branch. These perquisites are the prerogatives of the clergy alone, along with new silk gowns. We venture to say, however, that a new silk gown is generally vastly more needed by the singer in the choir than by the minister in the pulpit; but then the lady, by devoting only half a year's salary to the purpose, can buy a gown for herself.

##### HOW THE CLERGY ACT.

The establishment of a "College of Organists" in London, by the way—we may mention, while gossiping of organs and organists—has given the London *Musical World* an opportunity to launch out an invective against the clergy, which shows a delightful state of mutual admiration existing between the pulpit and the organ-lost; but, of course, it can be only of English Churches that the London paper thus speaks:

"The clergy being for some inscrutable reason for the most part a distinctly unmusical race, they are not likely to pay much homage to abstract professional merit. Being also for the most part of all men the most conservative of caste distinctions, they need not be expected to concede an atom of social position that cannot be enforced. Thus prepared, they come in contact with a class of men called organists, who—while much and varied accomplishment is required of them, and while they are entrusted with a duty which they may, according to the light of their culture, make into either a solemnity or a farce—are, under the ordinary rules of church management, treated with not a jot more ceremony than the beadle, pew-openers and the like. The result of the introduction, under such circumstances, cannot well be doubtful. A crop of dissension is sown betwixt the representatives of music and theology, of which

nothing save a rare combination of qualities on both sides can avert the fruit. The organist thinks—and often justly—that, for one that could be found to do all that he does at his end of the church, fifty might easily pass muster at the other. The parson does not trouble himself to think about the matter. He is quite content with his clerical supremacy; and is only surprised that any one else should deem it worth while to have an opinion."

#### HOW THE SINGERS ACT.

At the same time, it must be said that if organists and choir singers are not always respected, it is too often their own fault. In their view, too frequently, a clergyman is useful as keeping open a church for them to sing in; but he is, perhaps, a little unreasonable in insisting on preaching a sermon, for which the choir would prefer to substitute an anthem. The prayers of the church, however solemn, are intermissions in which to look over tune-books and talk gossip. And as to irreverence—if not irreligion—it nestles securely behind the curtains of the organ-loft, in a way that few in the body of the church are aware of. We now refer to American, and not to English choirs—though it is about the same there.

#### Demand for Tenors.

To change the subject, we would remark that the demand for tenors this season is very great, as that article is scarce, and their salaries vie with first-class sopranos. There are always plenty of bassos; and contralto voices seem, of late, to be increasing in number and improving in quality.

#### The Choir Interests.

Lest the unmusical reader should suppose that all this talk about choirs can interest but a limited number of people, let him or her just remember that there are some four hundred churches in New York and Brooklyn; that allowing but four singers and an organist to each, there are two thousand performers to begin with; that each performer has on an average three relatives with whom the choir affairs are discussed over the breakfast table, and we have six thousand folks interested in the subject. Ministers, music committees and those church-goers who pay attention to the subject of church music make, with all previously alluded to, at least ten thousand; so it will be seen that the choir interests of New York are large enough. As to art, we can unhesitatingly say that our church choirs embody a vast proportion of the vocal talent existing among us; and not till that talent shall be organized into some successful combination, will the general public have any idea of the number of good singers and good voices in New York and Brooklyn.

#### Beethoven's Seventh Symphony.

It commences with one of those effects of instrumentation of which Beethoven is incontestably the creator; the full orchestra strikes a strong and sharp chord, leaving suspended, during the silence that succeeds, a single hautboy that has entered, unperceived, in the preceding crash, and which goes on to develop a sustained melody. It is impossible to conceive a commencement more original. Repetitions of the sharp chords ensue, again and again; after each of which the *legato* theme grows, by added parts, till it attains a full harmony, when it gives place to a new feature, namely: a series of *staccato* scale passages, for the stringed band, accompanied or interspersed with fragments of the melody first heard.

The Allegro has a rhythm strongly marked, which, passing afterwards into the harmony, is reproduced under a multitude of aspects, scarcely ceasing its measured march until the end—a determined employment of rhythmical form which has never been attempted on such an extensive scale elsewhere; although in minor pieces—as, for example, in Schubert's songs—the idea frequently appears. This *allegro*, of which the extensive developments run constantly upon the same idea, is treated with such incredible skill—the changes of key are so frequent and so ingenious—the harmonic and other technical features so novel and often so bold—that the movement finishes before the attention and lively emotion which it excites in the audience have all abated.

The symphony is peculiarly celebrated for its *Andante*. The principal cause of the profound sensations excited by this extraordinary movement, lies also in the rhythm—a rhythm as simple as that of the *Allegro*, but of a form perfectly different. It consists merely of a dactyl followed by a spondee, and repeated incessantly; sometimes in several parts, sometimes in one only; sometimes serving as an accompaniment, sometimes concentrating the attention on itself, and sometimes forming the subject of a fugue. It appears first, after two bars of sustained harmony, on the low strings of the viola, violoncellos, and double basses, *nuanced* by a *piano* and *pianissimo*, full of melancholy; thence it passes to the second violins, while

the violoncellos and violas sing a pathetic lamentation of an inexpressibly touching character. The rhythmical phrase, ascending continually from one octave to another, arrives at the first violins, which pass it by a *crescendo*, to the full force of the wind instruments of the orchestra, while the plaintive theme still accompanying it, but now given out with extreme energy, assumes the character of a convulsive, heart-rending wail. To this succeeds an ethereal melody, pure, simple, sweet and resigned.

The basses alone continue their inexorable rhythm under this melodious bow in the clouds; it is, to borrow a citation from the poet,

"One fatal remembrance, one sorrow that throws  
Its black shade alike o'er our joys and our woes."

It is not improbable that this wonderful pathetic movement may have been intended by Beethoven to portray his own feelings under the terrible calamity that afflicted him; the only part of this symphony that is unfortunate composer ever heard was the roll of the drums.

The trio is one of the most remarkable and original morceaux which ever proceeded from Beethoven's pen. At the close of the *Scherzo*, on a unison passage, an A, occurring quite naturally, and without any appearance of design, is suddenly held by the whole band; transfixed, congealed, as it were, like the sleeping beauty; and is retained through the whole of the following movement. After four bars of the single note, a lovely melody creeps in, the time being considerably slackened to give the change more effect; this is repeated with a slight reinforcement, after which a second part is introduced leading to a repetition of the first part *fattissimo*. Meanwhile the other parts make a *crescendo* by a series of bold chords, and the original melody bursts out with the full band—the never-ceasing A being now thrown with startling effect upon the trumpets and drums. This extraordinary feature never fails to command the astonishment and delight of the audience. The theme of the trio, simple as it is, furnishes the striking example of a melody whose character may be entirely changed by the manner in which it is taken. When first played, smoothly and softly, it is sweet, beautiful, pastoral; when repeated by the full orchestra, it is grand, majestic, sublime.

The finale is not less rich than the preceding movements in novel features, in piquant modulations or in charming fancies. The commencement, a sharp chord, struck by the strings, answered instantaneously by the wind instruments, and followed by a dead pause, appears to be designed to call attention to the unusual form of the principal subject, commencing on the same chord. The rhythm here again is peculiar, consisting of an accentuation of the second beat of the bar, so frequently as to form the rule, instead of, as commonly, the exception. The greatest marvel is the *coda*. After the first or preliminary cadence, a few chords prepare the way for a most elaborate working of the first phrase of the theme, repeated many times and accompanied by combinations of the most striking originality. All the while the violins keep up an increasing reiteration of the subject in various keys, accompanied in corresponding harmonies by the wind band, and gradually rising *sempre più forte* on the grand pedal point. Half way through this point, the violins throw off impetuously the trammels of the figure that had so long bound them, and burst off into a series of the most brilliant passages; the basses still keep steady for some time to their E, but at last can no longer resist sharing in the jubilee of the rest of the orchestra; and the whole comes to a conclusion with an overpowering *éclat*—an ending worthy of such a masterpiece of genius, imagination, feeling and technical skill.

#### Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, MAY 14, 1864.

#### German Opera.

During the past fortnight we have had here what we had almost despaired of having for some years to come, a really good German Opera. Indeed the whole experience of Boston hitherto in German Opera has been limited to a single performance, we might call it a travesty, about seven years ago, of *Fidelio*, by a trumped up company that ran on here from New York, and did the thing so badly that the Italian fanatics were only strengthened in their partiality, and

could not perceive that Beethoven's music was half so good as Verdi's. Italian Opera, and no other, has been fashionable in all our cities, and it has not been common to believe in German singers, or that there can be any first-rate voices, any true, high art of singing, but the Italian, (or the Italianized-American), notwithstanding the fact, so pointedly set forth in manager Grover's announcement last week, that most of the Italian companies of late, both here and in France and England, have depended almost entirely upon Germans for their orchestra and chorus, while the names of many of their best principal singers, their "stars," have been German, with or without Italian terminations. But these have been chiefly engaged in executing the Italian music, or at least the Italian repertoire, which takes in Meyerbeer, Flotow, and such other German and French composers as have come half way to meet it, paying also a certain deference to Mozart. So, on the other hand, the German repertoire, still more cosmopolitan, as becomes the nation that knows Shakespeare so well, has adopted works of Cherubini, Boieldieu, Rossini, &c., looking more to art and genius than to mere nationality, though strong in that.

All our opera troupes and seasons, therefore, in spite of German elements in the performance, and in spite of Mozart, Meyerbeer and Gounod (what a conjunction of names!), have been Italian. A real German opera with German means, illustrating the German repertoire, we have not had an opportunity to know,—at least in Boston. We have heard of it, perchance have come upon it, some of us, in visits to New York and Philadelphia, these last years, as a sort of flitting nebular phenomenon, having but a half existence, only realized and relished within the Teutonic cloud realm of Gambrinus, attracting now and then a little notice in the Academies or minor theatres, decidedly not fashionable, no godsend to the importers of white kids. The amount of it is, that until now the German opera troupes in this country have been poor and fragmentary attempts, with some good elements, but by no means furnished for fair presentation of the master works of Mozart, Beethoven and Weber. It is due to the enterprising spirit of CARL ANSCHÜTZ, that so complete a company was organized last Fall, and due to his thorough musicianship, his mastery as a conductor, that a most refreshing degree of unity, animation and artistic feeling has been realized in their performances. He found it uphill work, however, through the winter. In Philadelphia there was more recognition than in New York; but generally the newspaper criticisms, which for the most part are reflexes of the fashions and "sensations" of the day in all matters of art and taste, praised very cautiously, and relapsed into convenient silence. What does not pay the manager, it does not pay to write about, seems to be tacitly adopted as the theory of newspaperdom. Then again, so fond are newspapers of praising everything in a certain perfunctory way, and so apt to praise most that which is least in Art, that earnest music-lovers here were habitually sceptical about what they read, as we are about the sensation bulletins of war news. We waited till we might hear with our own ears. And our hopes have been repeatedly raised during the winter, only to be disappointed, by the report that Anschütz was to bring his company to the Boston Theatre. Meanwhile we have gained

by the postponements. Within a few months Mr. Anschütz has added to his force several new singers from Germany, some of his brightest stars, such as Mme. Frederici-Himmer, the two admirable tenors, Habelmann and Himmer, and other names, which certainly are not the ones we used to read of in the New York papers early in the winter. Moreover, reaping no material harvest at all commensurate with so satisfactory an artistic result, and finding it too much for one man to be both musical and business head of such an enterprise, it was his good luck to meet in Mr. GROVER, the proprietor of theatres in Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington, a manager with insight to perceive the value and the capabilities of the thing, a man with means and will to assume the responsibility of it and place it once for all upon a sound material basis. Under his auspices the German Opera, thus set upon its feet again, has for some weeks past been triumphantly successful both in Philadelphia and Washington, almost eclipsing the Italian rival, and promising at all events to put an end to its monopoly from this time forth.

Boston may be quite as subject to "sensations" and the rule of fashion as the larger cities, and quite as strongly wedded to Italian Opera, if we judge by crowded houses; but Boston has a name for its love and cultivation of classical and German music, which naturally turns a German Opera this way. This reputation is not altogether unfounded, inasmuch as we have a large class among our music-lovers whom the frequent hearing of Beethoven's symphonies, Handel's and Mendelssohn's oratorios, &c., has educated into a very warm and tolerably appreciative admiration and continued demand for music of that deeply satisfying order; and it is true, to a great degree, of our city that here the intellectual and moral element, the highest taste and culture, are not only proudly recognized, but do in the long run compel the deference of fashion; nothing can long be fashionable which leaves them out. The opinion of this minority is always worth conciliating; it carries weight and sanction through the land. Mr. Grover, therefore, could well afford to risk the loss of a few thousands simply to make his Opera known in Boston, to show us what it is, and to have it, if not patronized by crowds, at least so pronounced upon as he had intelligent conviction that it must be. Hence this sudden appearance at this late hour in the season, with so much to distract men's minds; hence this quiet resting of the thing upon its unheralded artistic excellence, content for a time with winning the recognition of a few who know good music and good acting when they see and hear it.

All this we should have said in anticipation of their coming, if they had not come upon us by surprise. With only two or three days notice Anschütz and his company were with us. The first real advertisement was the manner in which they performed Flotow's *Martha* on Monday evening, May 4th, before an audience which made up by its musical intelligence and by its enthusiasm for its exceeding paucity of numbers. It was felt by all present that that single hearing by those few had established the right of the German company to succeed in Boston. A little more time to talk it about, to allow people to shape their engagements, and a few more performances and they must win the day. And so it went on with increase of interest and of audience from night to

night. The season was to be very brief, positively only a fortnight, with a different opera every evening, and no repetitions. We were to be impressed indeed, not only with the unity, the versatility, the excellence of their performance, but with the extent, variety and richness of their repertoire both in things familiar and things new to us. Here was the programme: for the first week, *Martha*, *La Dame Blanche*, *Faust*, *Der Freyschütz*, *Merry Wives of Windsor* and *Alessandro Stradella*; second week, *Don Juan* and *Fidelio*, sure, and perhaps *Zauberflöte*, *Tannhäuser*, *Robert* and *Das Nachtlager in Grenada*. The first half has been carried out to the letter.

Now *Martha* was not just the opera we should have chosen for the opening night. For these reasons. It has become almost too familiar, almost hackneyed; every Italian company has played it, and shall not this short first taste of German opera consist of things we do not get from everybody else? Then *Martha* is not distinctively a German opera, although a German wrote it: many a German writes Italian music; this is as much Italian and French as it is German; in no sense is it a representative German work, like *Fidelio* and the operas of Mozart and of Weber. Thirdly, it is not a great work, not even a second or third rate work, not a work of genius; it is only clever, graceful, pretty, lively, popular, &c. We confess we have seldom been able to sit through the whole of *Martha*: after the two sparkling first acts, after the fun is mainly over, and the lover is in his lunes, and the sentimental "Last rose of summer" business begins, we have found it something stale and tedious. The more the triumph, therefore, of these Germans, that we did sit it out that evening, and were so carried away, all of us, by the uncommon vivacity and genial excellence of the whole performance, that we did so in spite of ourselves most willingly. All agreed that *Martha* never was so well performed in Boston; and as the object was to strike a positive blow at the outset and show what this company was, we became convinced that they had made the right selection; only let us hope that it will not be all or mainly of this kind, that the study of popularity will not balk us of our desire of hearing in this country the true, the highest German opera, the great works which may rank with *Don Giovanni*, that higher German opera which we have a right to regard it as the mission of such a well-appointed company as this to illustrate in this country. But now of the performers.

Mme. JOHANNSEN, the only member of the troupe not new to us, sang and acted "mi-Lady" like an accomplished artist. Although her voice, in the highest tones, is somewhat worn and hard, yet it always true and telling, sometimes sweet; and in execution she has vastly improved since she last sang here. Indeed there was much exquisite vocalization. She has her inspirations, always rising to the height of the impassioned moments. Mme. FREDERICI was a charming Nancy. With a voice of singular purity and freshness, rich and reedy in the contralto and middle tones, vibrating like a canary in its extensive upward register; subdued, soulful, sweet with native refinement, but finding power for every earnest utterance; with a faultless charm of style, so easy that it seems spontaneous nature; singing always with expression, never overdoing, never falling short; and with the perpetual play of expression, whether singing or listening, on

her face, and in every gesture and movement of her comely person, she makes a most harmonious impression, quite disarming criticism. She is very young, not positively handsome, but her good honest German face lights up with inspirations and grows beautiful at times, as did the homelier features of the Lind. This time she had all the pretty archness and vivacity of Nancy, singing delightfully, but always modestly within her character as second. The courting scene, between her and Plunkett, was worthy of the days of Phillips and Carl Formes. The sturdy, jolly farmer's part was well filled by Herr STEINECKE, who acts well and sings well, with a good baritone, only a little husky. The tenor Herr HIMMER, was a *tenore robusto* indeed, refreshing to hear. None of the Brignoli sort of indifference or good-for-nothing sentimentality; a fine manly person and fine actor, with no nonsense, and a voice large, rich, firm and even in all its tones, still in its fresh prime, with a pure and noble style in the use of it, indulging little in ornament, but giving out the music honestly and largely, which the ear drinks in with more and more delight. For a very high note he resorts to the falsetto, but with good effect. On the whole, all felt that it was a long time since we had had so noble a tenor.

The part of the foolish old lover, Sir Tristram, found a suitable representative in Herr GRAFF, who is not the strongest basso of the troupe, but a useful one. The chorus, male and female, was a little larger than we have been used to, and far more effective, as well as better looking and acting with musical, fresh, telling voices, singing with spirit and ensemble. The orchestra, of not quite 40 instruments, is remarkably good, especially in the reeds, and the brass do not bray out mere noise. The admirable unity with which all work together with a hearty will, as if to bring out the opera rather than to distinguish themselves, verifies what we have always heard, and what some of us who have been in Germany have known, of this peculiar merit of the German stage, whether in opera or drama. If they have not as many great singers or fine voices as the Italians, they always seek to realize a good artistic whole. All parts harmonize, and the subordinate parts are good, the minor details are cared for, so that the total impression is pleasant; unlike the slovenly manner in which most Italian operas are produced, with a few parts notable, and the rest lifeless or ridiculous.

Tuesday, May 5th, the charming old opera of Boieldieu, *La Dame Blanche* (*Die weisse Dame*) Audience considerably larger. This opera was written in 1825, and there has scarcely been a greater favorite on the French, the German, or the English stage. It was indifferently given in this city some 25 or 30 years ago, by an English and a French troupe, and much of the music is familiar, floating about in the general air, especially the beautiful overture. But the opera as such was new to us here and now. The work of a Frenchman, it is one of the operas which have become German by adoption and affinity. It is thoroughly *genial* music, Mozart-ish in spirit, and after the German heart. And it is one of the most graceful, beautiful and natural of all light romantic operas. Full of bewitching melodies, of the kind that never can become vulgar, it also continually surprises and delights the ear by fine traits of har-

mony and modulation and nice contrapuntal interweaving of voices. There is no vulgar commonplace, no claptrap, nothing of the maulding sentimental about it; full of tenderness, this music is all sound and wholesome. And the rendering was most happy. The part of George Brown presented another admirable tenor of the troupe, a *tenore di grazia*, Herr HABELMANN, in a most favorable light. Too much has not been said in Philadelphia of the beauty of his voice, nor of his pure, expressive style of singing, seconded by natural and graceful action. Certainly his singing of the old Scotch air "Robin Adair" in the last act was one of the most refined and exquisite specimens of ballad singing to be heard anywhere. Habelmann established himself at once in the hearty favor of his audience. When have we had a company with *two* such tenors!

Mme. JOHANSEN was again the artist in the part of the White Lady. Mme. FREDERICI was all the more artist by consenting, with a true German spirit, to take the small part of the old servant Margaret, looking sweetly in her matron's cap and singing the little ballad touchingly. Fräulein CANISSA, a sprightly, rosy little black-eyed Jewish looking maiden, with one of those bright, hard-enamelled, clear and cutting little soprano voices, so like her eyes and face, has a good deal of vocal execution, acts lively and naturally, and made a nice Jenny, the coquettish little wife of farmer Dickson. The latter part was well filled by Herr CROMFELD, tenor, who looks, acts and sings like an old stager, perfectly at home in German opera, and happy in helping out the whole. One of the most important rôles is that of the crafty guardian and steward Galveston, which was splendidly done by Herr HERMANN, a magnificent basso, colossal in voice and person, dignified in action, and delivering his grand *profondo* tones or his rich ringing higher ones with equal clearness, truth and telling effect. We have had no such basso since the better days of Formes; and he has resources yet to be found out in other characters. In the spoken dialogue, which replaces the Italian *purlando* in most German operas—not advantageously, to our taste—Herr Hermanns is particularly clear and of chaste accent. Everybody went away delighted with *Die Weisse Dame*, and hoping it would be repeated.

*Wednesday, Third Night.* Gounod's "Faust" is another of those operas which we would willingly have left to the Italians, at least until we have secured some half a score of those distinctively best German works, with which our people are so unacquainted. Were it not better that a German troupe at first should stand on its peculiarity, doing what others cannot or do not do, and showing its catholicity later? But, "Faust" is now the fashion; many there be and loud that call for it, and what more sure to fill the house? Besides there is curiosity to compare the German with the Italian rendering. The house was indeed much more nearly full. The verdict we think must be for the German presentment. There was much more life and spirit in it as a whole. The choruses, especially those of the "Kirmesse," made a livelier sensation. Herr HIMMER's voice and action were very fine in Faust, and the Mephistopheles of HERMANN was marvellously effective in its way, that of the popular tradition clown devil, and not the polished Iago-like gentleman, the 19th century devil, of Goethe. The Gretchen of FREDERICI was perfectly charming, more exquisite even than Miss Kellogg's, in that it seemed less like a

study; she looked the type of modest, pious, lovely German maidenhood; her rich, soulful, sympathetic voice, and the seemingly unconscious truth of action, made it "a thing of beauty and of joy forever." The Church scene was omitted (many encores had made it late); but of the last scene, in the prison, much more was made than we have seen before. In no part would we have exchanged with the Italians, except for Bellini's Valentine, in which Herr STEINECKE was by no means bad. It was so artistic, too, to put JOHANSEN in the pretty little part of Siebel, which she did exquisitely!

*Thursday.* A crowded house for Weber's *Frey-schütz*. Boston is alive to the fact of German Opera at last! The charm of the wonderful music is infallible, and the hope of hearing it for the first time well rendered made it the gala night of the week. Indeed it was an admirable performance. It was rare delight to listen to that orchestra and that wonderful instrumentation, the human and the mysterious expression of the high and low clarionet tones, the bassoons, the sylvan horns, etc., even were that all. Then the chorus, picturesque in appearance, sang so finely. HABELMANN, though struggling with a cold, gave the trying music of Max, its alternations of despair and hope, with true power of expression. GRAFF has not weight of voice, nor life enough, for Caspar; it should have been Hermanns for that is a great part. HRONFELD tossed off the vain Kilian's gay, triumphant song as well as his voice would let him, always true to the humor of the thing, as Nym has it.

But the memorable thing of all was the Agathe of FREDERICI. It was too beautiful to speak of; something almost holy in the truth and purity of feeling, the harmony of voice, song, look and action, which made it as near to Weber's ideal of the part as anything probably has ever come since Jenny Lind. The scene: "Wie nahte mir der Schlummer," with the prayer "Leise, leise," entranced the audience. All that we have said of her Gretchen was more than confirmed here. We have had greater executive vocalists, but, with the exception of Lind and Bosio, when so true a singer in the soul's sense of the word? Little CANISSA's voice is too outleaping and demonstrative at times, not so sympathetic and blending as we could wish, but she entered right heartily and prettily into the part of the merry and good little friend and cousin Aennchen, and sang its florid melody in a way that won with further hearing.

The *diablers* of the Wolf's Glen scene was sufficiently elaborate; taken as a joke by the audience, of course, as it is in Germany, for such superstitions have long since lost their hold on the imagination; but one had only to listen to the orchestra to find it mystical and grand. The Bridesmaids' Chorus was as good as new, and so the Hunter's Chorus. The only pity is that the music in the last act of the *Frey-schütz* is so much weaker than the rest of the opera; then the inspiration seems to have run low; charming melodies are forced in, but nothing worked up to a culminating glory of ensemble.

The week closed with a couple of light operas, new to Boston, with only moderate audiences.

On Friday, Nicolai's "Merry Wives of Windsor," full of sparkling, graceful music, of which the overture had given us a foretaste, extremely comical, and having the advantage of a cleverly constructed libretto, as close as an opera could be to Shakespeare. HERMANN, by his capital impersonation, both in make-up, acting, song and spoken dialogue, quite dispelled our fears of the absurdity of Falstaff set to music. Hackett's Fat Knight is not more enjoyable, and here the music lifts it out of coarseness, without any loss of humor. He was as courtly and gallant, as he was droll and merry. The drinking song (drinking for a wager) was inimitable, and nothing could exceed the drollery of the solemn march and chorus with which the "dead men" were borne out. JOHANSEN and

FREDERICI, as Mrs. Ford and Mrs. Page, acted to the life, and had a good deal of sparkling, sometimes *bravura*, music to sing, especially the former, who did all with fine art and tact. HABELMANN again showed the beauty of his voice and style as Fenton, with CANISSA for his "sweet Anne Page." KRONFELD's Dr. Caius and HAIMER'S Slender were comical enough.

For a Matinée on Saturday, Flotow's *Stradella*, which to our surprise we found more enjoyable than *Martha*. As music it has generally the same traits. The more serious and sentimental parts are the weakest, but there are some fine comic bits; and there is an unaccompanied trio, quite in the old Italian vein, that was singularly beautiful. A capital subject for an opera is the romantic story of the old composer, which the libretto wisely does not follow out to its tragical conclusion, but stops with the rescue of the lovers through the power of Stradella's music, melting the hearts of the assassins in Rome. The carnival and serenade (begun in bad tune) in Venice, with the flight of the *maestro* and his pupil Leonora (another Abelard and Eloise), from the jealous guardian, made a picturesque first act of moonlight and tender music. The pursuit to Stradella's home near Rome, the simple wedding festival, and the quaint Italian humor of the two assassins, HABELMANN and STEINECKE, increase the interest in the second act, and a more picturesque, naive roguish than Habelmann was, could hardly be conceived. In the third act, the arrival of the guardian (Venetian lover in the history), the attempt of the assassins to creep up and stab Stradella while he rehearses his hymn for the *M donna* Festival (the story says an *Oratorio* in the *Laterna* church), their repentance, and the happy union of the lovers, though, with the exception of the trio, less original as music, still leave the impression of a unique and pleasing whole. HIMMER was Stradella, and sung his music quite as well as it deserved. Both the fine tenors were in the cast! We have no room to say much of this opera. We enjoyed it much; only we could wish that the triumph of Music in the last act, where it melts the hearts of *freund* Malvolio and *freund* Barberino, and moves stones to repentance, were more signal, that is to say greater music.

Here we must pause for the present. This second week has offered after all but two new things, *Don Juan* (strange to say, the worst of their performances) and *Fidelio*, while *Faust*, *Frey-schütz* and *Martha* have been repeated, and *Faust* will be again repeated this afternoon, bringing the short, rich season to a close.

**CONCERTS.** We trust our readers will bear in mind the concert in the Music Hall, to-morrow evening, of Mr. PECK, the faithful and obliging superintendent of the Hall. He has Miss LOUISE KELLOGG for a prime attraction, and a varied programme in which a host of our best singers, organists, &c., will take part. The ORCHESTRAL UNION close their afternoon concerts next Wednesday with Beethoven's Seventh Symphony. A very nice synopsis of it will be found on another page, which we saved up from a Chicago Philharmonic programme. Mrs. FROHOCK will play the organ.

The past fortnight has been rich in Concerts, which we must review next time. Now we have scarcely room to mention the capital performance of "Elijah" (with Miss PHILLIPS as contralto); the charming concert, and enthusiastic reception, of Miss PHILLIPS, and of Mme. GUERRABELLA with her; Mr. Eichberg's Sacred Concert; the fine Organ Concerts of Mr. WHITING (a new hand at our Great Organ, and an adept) and of Mrs. FROHOCK; and two of the richest afternoon programmes of this rich season of the Orchestral Union.

**NEW YORK.** The fifth and last Philharmonic Concert (April 23) had for its main feature the great Symphony in C by Schubert. Carl Bergmann conducted the noble orchestra of seventy-five. The other selections were Schumann's Overture to "Genoveva," Aria from Mozart's "Magic Flute," Piano-forte Concerto in A minor, op. 85, by Hummel, played by Richard Hoffman; Romanza from Weber's "Euryanthe," Concert Overture in A, by J. Rietz. The aria and Romanza were sung by Sig. Lotti, the German tenor of Maretz's Italian Opera. The Philharmonic Society have an excellent rule whereby *encores* "cannot be permitted."

The Oratorio "Judas Maccabaeus," a performance of which was mentioned in our last, was accompanied by an orchestra, and we are assured an efficient one. We gathered our first intelligence of the performance from a New York paper, which only mentioned a piano accompaniment. The Conductor's name, too, is Frederic Louis Ritter, and not Franz Ritter.

WORCESTER, MASS. "Stella" in the *Palladium* of last week thus chronicles Mr. C. C. Stearns's concert and the first performance of his new Mass.

It took place on Thursday evening, filled Washburn Hall to its full extent, and was pronounced one of the best concerts ever given in Worcester. It opened with a "Tantum Ergo," composed by Mr. Stearns, and well sung by the club under his leadership, with assistance of an efficient little orchestra of seven pieces. The work was well received, especially the second movement, which was brilliant and telling. Mrs. A. S. Allen sang "Jerusalem! thou that killest the Prophets!" with excellent expression; and a quartet choir sang Owen's "Ave Maria." The second part of the programme was occupied by Mr. Stearns's original Mass in A, a work noticed at length in our columns last week, and which, on the occasion of its first public performance, revealed new beauties to those who heard it in rehearsal, and won from the large audience only high encomiums of praise. Rarely does it happen that a young composer succeeds so well in bringing out his first work, in summoning such efficient aid—choral and instrumental, and in more than meeting public expectation. A more enthusiastic audience is rarely found in our concert-rooms; and yet it was not demonstrative, did not even demand an *encore*; but there was that unmistakable air of cordial appreciation, more valued doubtless by composer and performers than the loudest applause. The choruses were well sung; so, too, the majority of the solos, quartets, &c. The strong points of the work came out with new force, and the unity of the whole was even more apparent than before. The "Et Incarnatus;" the "Agnus Dei"—with the *Miserere* breathed out, rather than sung; and the "Dona Nobis," were especially admired. The orchestral parts were the subject of general remark for their originality, richness, and the sound musical knowledge shown in their composition. It is the general desire that the performance of the Mass should be repeated. We hope to hear it in Mechanics Hall, with a larger orchestra and an organ. Why not at the dedication of the fine instrument to be held here during the coming fall?

We should be glad to copy "Stella's" analytic description of the Mass, but its length renders that impossible just now. For the present, let an opinion, which we find in the Worcester *Spy*, suffice. The initials "E. H." denote one entitled to express an opinion:

The ear is not wearied with dull and frivolous commonplace, nor is a pure taste offended by the cheap surprises which too often form the staple of modern composition. There is that consistency of design and unity of effect combined with ingenuity of detail and, in many passages, elegance of finish, which belong to the higher class of composition. The aim of the author has been high, and he has reached his mark with much more success than commonly attends a first essay in the grand style. There are passages of great beauty in the course of the work, while there is not a single weak strain. It is not an imitation at all, but on the contrary quite an original production. The "Et incarnatus" is singularly fine, while the "Agnus Dei" and the "Dona nobis" have very striking merit. A careful criticism may detect here and there the traces of the youthful hand, particularly in the occasional redundancy of the harmony and the tendency to what is technically termed "imitation," that is, the repetition of the same melodic figure on too many degrees of the staff. The disposition towards "sequences" both in playing and in composition is characteristic of young performers and writers. It shows itself rarely however in this work. Upon the whole this production must be pronounced a decided achievement in a right direction, with fewer drawbacks than usual.

PHILADELPHIA. A grand Musical Festival, inaugurating the Great Central Fair (for the Sanitary Commission), opened on the 4th inst., at the Academy of Music, to last a fortnight. The entertainments consist of operas in the English language, Oratorios and miscellaneous concerts. The Oratorios announced are "The Creation" and "Judas Maccabeus." The operas are the "Bohemian Girl," by Balfe, "Maritana," by Wallace, and Mr. Wm. Henry Fry's new opera, "Notre Dame of Paris," the subject taken from Victor Hugo's romance. The committee state that "they deem the opportunity a favorable one to essay the illustration of music, in all its most popular forms, upon a scale hitherto unattempted in this country, and which will do justice to various compositions, as

they are interpreted only in the chief capitals of Europe." To this end, the committee say:

They have made a contract with Mr. L. E. Harrington (now of New York, and formerly of this city), Manager of the American Opera Company. The artists and auxiliaries engaged by Mr. Harrington, far exceed in number and aggregate merit any force ever employed upon the Lyrical stage of this continent. The following are the names—the principal vocalists of the list having performed of late with great success in New York.

Musical Director—Mr. Theodore Thomas, of New York. Conductors of Oratorios—Dr. Leopold Meignen and Carl Sentz, of Philadelphia. Leaders in Miscellaneous Concerts—Dr. W. P. Cunningham and Messrs. C. C. Kopitz and Charles Dodsworth, of Philadelphia. Leader of Military Band—Mr. Adolph Birgfeld, of Philadelphia. Pianist—Mr. J. N. Pattison, of New York; Organist—Mr. Arthur H. Messiter, of Philadelphia. Harpist—Mr. Alfred F. Tolman, of New York. Operatic Stage Manager—Mr. B. A. Baker, of New York. Operatic Prompter—Mr. Leopold Engelke, of Philadelphia. First Soprano—Mrs. Comte Borchard. First Contralto—Mrs. Jenny Kempton. Second Contralto—Miss Louise Myers. First Tenor—Mr. Walter Birch. First Baritone—Mr. S. C. Campbell. Second Baritone—Mr. William Skaats. Bass—Mr. Edward Seguin.

The Opera Chorus consists of one hundred selected singers, with a corps of accomplished amateur volunteers.

The Oratorio Chorus includes members of the Handel and Haydn Society, of the Harmonia Society, and of eleven German Choral Societies of this city, and of the Mozart Musical Union, of Reading, forming an aggregate of many hundreds of voices.

The orchestra and military band for operas, and all other divisions of the Festival, are composed of 95 of the most distinguished instrumentalists of Philadelphia and New York.

In the dramatic department of the operas are a Corps de Ballet, and other assistants, numbering one hundred and fifty.

The chief of these "hitherto unattempted" magnificencies is Fry's Opera, the production of which, we are told, costs the Fair some \$12,000. For our poor soldiers' sake may it put as large a sum upon the profit side! Besides the array of singers, orchestra, and hundreds of people, ballet dancers, &c., on the stage, there is a church organ on the stage, and "a peal of full-sized church bells," while the scenery and stage appointments are "all elaborately illustrative of Paris in the fifteenth century." Three or four performances have thus far been given, and of course the newspaper critics all blaze out in full glorification of the new opera, if only because it is brought out on such a Jullienesque and magnitudinous scale, and is by an American. Some of the New York dailies, it seems, despatched their critics to Philadelphia expressly to report of it. (One would think it might have been heard as far as New York in a still hour.) One of those reports, that of the *Tribune's* "special," which we have copied on another page, gives the impression of an ardent believer in Fry's musical authority and genius, an advocate (in our own columns before now) of Fry's criticism, Fry's creatorship, and all Fry's eccentricities. Most of the local and the New York reporters are equally ready and wholesale with their praise. The only exception reaches us too late to copy it, a much more temperate, well considered article in the *Press* of May 9, which, evidently not withholding praise where praise is due, has such sentences as these: "Of course, it is very fulsome praise to rank 'Notre Dame' with the works of Bellini, Donizetti and Verdi—works of which it is not free from imitation. An inspiration of one melody, equal to the least of Bellini's, upon whom Mr. F. has modelled his sentimental music, would have given him a popular fame long ago" "Why yearn after the Italian mock Eden? Why attempt to rival Bellini's sweetness or Verdi's sonority?" "The man who translates a noble song into noble music will do his art and his nation a service, which imperfect operatists, with all the drowning sensations of the stage, will not readily equal. Mr. Fry would gratefully acknowledge that one song of Schubert's, written in a quarter of an hour at a country tavern, is worth the whole of his laborious opera."

The ear is not wearied with dull and frivolous commonplace, nor is a pure taste offended by the cheap surprises which too often form the staple of modern composition. There is that consistency of design and unity of effect combined with ingenuity of detail and, in many passages, elegance of finish, which belong to the higher class of composition. The aim of the author has been high, and he has reached his mark with much more success than commonly attends a first essay in the grand style. There are passages of great beauty in the course of the work, while there is not a single weak strain. It is not an imitation at all, but on the contrary quite an original production. The "Et incarnatus" is singularly fine, while the "Agnus Dei" and the "Dona nobis" have very striking merit. A careful criticism may detect here and there the traces of the youthful hand, particularly in the occasional redundancy of the harmony and the tendency to what is technically termed "imitation," that is, the repetition of the same melodic figure on too many degrees of the staff. The disposition towards "sequences" both in playing and in composition is characteristic of young performers and writers. It shows itself rarely however in this work. Upon the whole this production must be pronounced a decided achievement in a right direction, with fewer drawbacks than usual.

## Special Notices.

### DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF THE

### LATEST MUSIC.

Published by Oliver Ditson & Co.

#### Vocal, with Piano Accompaniment.

I'm a young man from the country. Comic song.

Harry Clifton. 30

The young man that nobody could "come to over," although he was from the "country." Fine melody.

'Twas evening, at the window. (Erinnerung.) Song.

Graben Hoffman. 30

Of much merit, A "forget-me-not" song, full of pensive thought.

Tenting on the old camp ground. W. Kittredge.

(As sung by the Hutchinson family.) 30

Another excellent war song, simple and clear in style, like other melodies sung by "the tribe of Asa."

Kyrie Eleison. (The sky is calm and cloudless.)

F. Booth. 30

One of Longfellow's solemn hymns, set to Mendelssohn-like music, by the Florence composer. The idea of the anthem, begun by the sounding surf in rocky caverns, responded to by the resounding lines of breakers, listened to by the stars, is well represented in the harmony.

Tragedy in the Tenth Avenue. Comic song.

C. W. Hunt. 30

Isabella with the gingham umbrella. Comic song.

H. Clifton. 30

Two funny songs, not very refined, but good enough as provocatives of mirth.

Sweet and low, wind of the western sea.

F. S. Davenport. 30

A charming lullaby, with sweet and chaste music.

Union and liberty forever. Song and Chorus.

W. O. Perkins. 30

A stirring chorus, suitable for war times.

Song of all songs. Combination song.

S. C. Foster. 30

One of the curious medley songs for which many people, just now, are so pleased.

#### Instrumental Music.

Young Zephyrs. (Tone Pictures, No. 6.)

Georg Reynald. 30

A graceful and effective piece, and good for pupils.

Carroll & Queen's double clog dance. Nos. 1 & 2.

G. L. G. 30

A couple of bright dancing tunes, familiar no doubt, to those who have attended, (and laughed,) at Morris' Pell and Trowbridge's entertainments. Has a colored title.

The echoes of Killarney. Brinley Richards.

One of Richard's sweetest pieces. Contains the melody of "The meeting of the waters." Not difficult.

Faust march. Soldier's chorus. For Brass Band. 1.00

This celebrated march is now ready for the bands around the country. Send in orders in time to bring it out on the fourth of July.

Ariel. Caprice a la valse. B. Richards. 50

#### Books.

Henning's Practical Violin School.

\$2.50

This is an instruction book, with a great deal of plain, homely common sense in its directions to teachers and pupils, and is evidently the work of an instructor who loves "his trade" and his instrument. With German and English words.

MUSIC BY MAIL.—Music is sent by mail, the expense being two cents for every four ounces, or fraction thereof. Persons at a distance will find the conveyance a saving of time and expense in obtaining supplies. Books can also be sent at double these rates.

